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Fifth Meeting, Monday, January 28th, 1861.

LORD ASHBURTON, PRESIDENT, in the Chair.

PRESENTATIONS.—*The Rev. G. Richards, D.D. ; Consul A. W. Hanson ; and W. R. Looker, Esq., were presented upon their Election.*

ELECTIONS.—*Sir Charles T. Bright ; General Eber ; the Rev. C. J. Fynes-Clinton ; Consul C. Pemberton Hodgson ; the Rev. E. H. Mainwaring Sladen ; the Marquis of Sligo ; the Rev. C. Hill Wallace ; the Rev. S. E. Wharton ; Lieut. A. T. Windus, I.N. ; and James Aikin ; Walter Brodie ; James Campbell ; John E. Davis, Master R.N. ; N. Vaughan Edwards-Vaughan ; J. Wilson Holmes ; John Learmonth ; Alexander Macmillan ; George Newman ; G. H. Oliphant Ferguson ; Julius Reuter ; Frederick Simpson ; Ronald Thomson (Attaché Persian Mission) ; John Walker ; and W. Warder, Esqrs., were elected Fellows.*

ACCESSIONS.—Among the Accessions to the Library and Map Rooms since the former Meeting were Dunlop's Hunting in the Himalaya ; Shaffner's Telegraph Manual ; Jinman's Winds and their Courses ; Transactions of the Institute of Civil Engineers, of the Society of Natural History of Geneva, Royal Society of Edinburgh, &c. ; Storm Chart of the British Islands by the Board of Trade ; Admiralty Chart of the North Atlantic Ocean, &c.

The PRESIDENT.—The subjects for our consideration to-day are of so interesting a character, that I should be doing unwisely if I were to occupy your time beyond a few moments, in making such preliminary observations as are expected from your President. The papers which are about to be read relate altogether to the physical and geographical facts upon which the proposition has been based for the extension of the Electric Telegraph line between this country and America, by the route of the Færøe Islands, Iceland, Greenland, and Labrador. It comes especially within the province of the Royal Geographical Society to receive and to record those facts as purely belonging to the science of Physical Geography. We are so fortunate as to have a great many labourers working for us in the field of geography ; some who have been sent out by the Society, like Speke and Livingstone, are doing our work, and at the same time doing work for many other societies. We have labourers also not less diligent, and not less useful to us as well as to the world : they are those who are occupied in other pursuits, but who come to us to record the facts they have observed, and to enable us to treasure them up as the material for future research. Among the labours of this class, not the least valuable are the researches which we are met to record to-day. They were undertaken not for the purpose of acquiring geographical knowledge simply, but in order to carry out the great and beneficent scheme of connecting the two continents of Europe and America by means of telegraphic communication. Yet, at the same time that we receive these facts, we must take care not to suffer ourselves to be led away into that which is altogether out of our province, an attempt to pronounce any judgment upon the value of that scheme. That is a question for others to decide, not for us. Therefore, whilst we ourselves may look upon the facts that may be presented to us with philosophic

calmness, there may, on the other hand, be those who are so deeply interested in the material success of electric telegraph connection with America, as to be drawn into an eager contest to set up the merits of one scheme in preference to those of another. Should there be any gentlemen present prepared to carry these feelings into the discussion, I feel assured they will remember this, that it is those who are beaten that generally complain, and that the man who is the winner at chess is not the man to throw the pieces at his adversary's head. I believe we shall have no symptoms of distress exhibited; that we shall not have anybody manifesting the conviction passing in his mind that he is worsted in the argument. I will now call upon Sir Leopold McClintock to read the first paper that is set down on the list.

The Papers read were—

1. *Surveys of H. M. S. Bulldog.* By Capt. SIR F. LEOPOLD MCCLINTOCK, R.N., F.R.G.S.

IN compliance with a request from the promoters of the North Atlantic Telegraph Route, Her Majesty's Government despatched the *Bulldog* under my command, on the 1st of July last, with orders to ascertain the depth of the ocean, and as far as possible the nature of the bottom, between the Færøe Islands and Iceland, Iceland and Greenland, and between Greenland and Hamilton Inlet on the Labrador coast. I was also directed, should my time permit, to make a slight examination of that inlet—being British territory; but in no other instance did my duty extend to the examination of any of the coasts I was required to approach. With the exception of Hamilton Inlet, none of the positions for the shore-ends of the proposed lengths of cable were suggested when I sailed from England. The duty of selecting them was subsequently entrusted, by the promoters of this Telegraph Route, to Captain Allen Young in the *Fox*; consequently, my lines of soundings have not in every instance been carried in from the deep sea, so as to unite exactly with the coast explorations of Captain Young.

Although my visit to the Færøe Islands was not for the purpose of making any examination of their shores, yet I could not fail to observe that a submarine cable, in connection with the main island, and a land-wire across it, could be maintained with perfect ease. In my official report to the Secretary of the Admiralty, written previously to my return to England, and which I shall have frequent occasion to quote, I have remarked that on landing at Thorshaven, the chief town of the islands, I observed that the little bays near it afforded ample shelter and security for any cable landed within them. The best harbour in the group is Westmanshaven, but it is situated in a channel through which the tide runs fully six miles an hour, and for this reason it would not be advisable to bring the cable there.